

**THIS BROCHURE IS DESIGNED WITH THE PARENT IN MIND.** If your child attends one of California's public schools, this guide can help you with some of the basic information you need to know. It is intended as a general guideline to alert you to some important issues and to help you know what questions to ask. The most important thing to remember is that each school district sets its own policies, based on state and federal law. To find out exactly what you need to know, contact the school district. If you are new to an area, contact the County Office of Education.

**IMMIGRATION**

**IMMUNIZATION** At the time

of enrollment, your child must

be up-to-date on all required

immunizations. All children

entering kindergarten are

required to have had

the chicken pox vaccine.

Requirements can change;

contact your district for the

current requirements.

If your child has **special needs**, contact the

district for help in establishing an appropriate

educational plan for your child. Special needs can

include physical disabilities, speech or hearing

impairments, emotional or behavioral problems or

speech and language difficulties. If you think your

child might need help, contact the district. If you

have questions about what services are available,

contact the California Department of Education,

Special Education Division.

**Enrolling your child**

in school is the first step.

By the time your child is

4 years old, you should

be in contact with your

school district to find out

what the requirements

are for enrollment.

In order to be enrolled

into kindergarten, your

child must be 5 years

old by December 2 of

that school year.

When you enroll your

child, you will be

required to provide a

legal birth certificate,

up-to-date shot records

and proof of your home

address. If you do not

live in the attendance

area of the school you

want your child to

attend, you can enroll

your child through Open

Enrollment. Forms and

brochures are available

at any public school office.

**ATTENDANCE** For children to learn, they must be

in school. However, you have the right to keep your

child home when ill, or for whatever reason you feel

it is necessary. The district cannot reduce your child's

grades due to absence if the work that was missed

is made up.

**AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS** Many

parents work full-time and need before

and after school care for their children.

If you need care before or after school, the

district can help you find what programs

are available. Some schools have on-site

educational or recreational programs.

**FOOD PROGRAMS** There are a number of

state- and federally-funded food programs which

provide breakfast, lunch and snacks. These programs

are available to all children. Check with your school

to find out what's available.

**TESTING & ASSESSMENT**

Whether or not your child

is meeting grade-level

standards is determined

through periodic testing,

regular assessment and

teacher judgement.

To find out when and

how your child is tested

and what the standards

are, contact the district.

**SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS** are

available to help your child keep up

and meet grade-level standards.

Ask the district about before and

after school educational, tutoring

and summer school programs.

**PROMOTION & RETENTION**

The law requires that all

students meet certain

grade-level standards before

being promoted to the next

grade. Students can be

retained, or held back, if they

have not achieved grade-

level proficiency. Children at

risk of retention are

identified early in the school

year. The parents are

notified so that they can

work with the teacher to

come up with interventions,

such as tutoring, before or

after school programs or

summer school, to help the

child succeed. Contact your

district to find out what the

policies are for determining

whether to retain or promote

your child.

**HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM** Beginning in 2004,

all high school seniors will be required to pass

a high school exit exam in order to graduate.

Students will be given a number of opportunities

to take the exam prior to graduation. To find out

more about the exam and when your child is

eligible to begin taking it, contact the district.

**ENGLISH AS A SECOND**

**LANGUAGE Children**

who are learning to speak

English need extra help.

Check with your district

about tutors or mentors

who can work with your

child and your child's

teacher.

**FINANCIAL AID** It is never too early to start thinking about how to pay for your child's college. If your child is in high school, it is time to start checking into what kind of financial aid is available and whether your child might be eligible. Contact the district or your local community college financial aid office.

**RESOURCES**

**U.S. Department of Education** ..... [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 800.USA.LEARN  
Washington, DC 20202-0498 [800.872.5327]

**California Department of Education** .... [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)  
1430 N Street 916.319.0800  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**California Department of Health Services**  
**Office of Vital Records** ..... [www.dhs.ca.gov/chs/ovr](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/chs/ovr)  
[for copies of birth records] select "services"  
MS5103, P.O. Box 997410 916.445.2684  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7410

COURTESY OF **SENATOR CHRISTINE KEHOE**



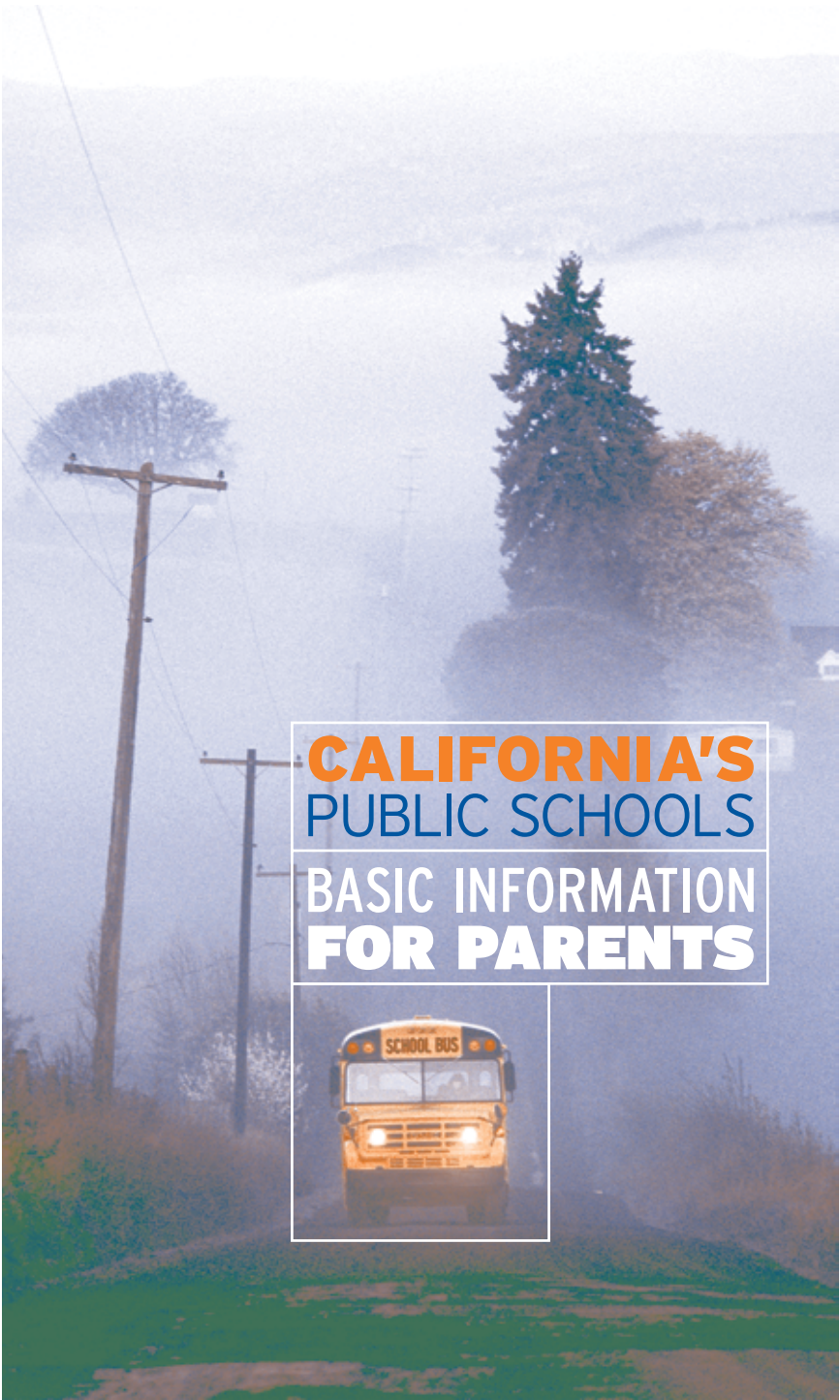
[senator.kehoe@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.kehoe@sen.ca.gov)  
[www.sen.ca.gov/kehoe](http://www.sen.ca.gov/kehoe)

**CAPITOL OFFICE**  
State Capitol Room 3086  
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900  
tel 916.445.3952

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
2445 Fifth Avenue, Suite 200  
San Diego, CA 92101  
tel 619.645.3133

09/04

Prepared by the California State Senate. Designed and printed by Senate Reprographic Services.



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**IMMIGRATION**

All children who enroll in public school must be accepted. It is against the law to deny any child enrollment into public school based on immigration status. If you have questions, contact the district or the U.S. Department of Education.

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